

# CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS, AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK OF SCOTLAND," "GAZETTEER OF SCOTLAND," &c.; AND BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, AUTHOR OF THE "TRADITIONS OF EDINBURGH," "HISTORY OF THE SCOTTISH REBELLIONS," "PICTURE OF SCOTLAND," "SCOTTISH BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY," &c.

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PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

A SUPPLEMENT to the JOURNAL, containing a Memoir of our distinguished and lamented countryman, SIR WALTER SCOTT, will be published with the present Number. It will occupy 12 pages, and the price will be Threepence.

The compilation of this Life, which contains sufficient matter to fill an octavo volume, has been the work of years; and consists of many curious and interesting particulars, both of his earlier and later days; an account of all his publications, some original fragments of his compositions, with a comprehensive view of his literary character. It is published in this cheap form for the purpose of furnishing the readers of CHAMBERS' JOURNAL with an appropriate and acceptable Supplement, as well as giving to every family in the British dominions, an opportunity of possessing the Life of one, whose genius has been of universal appreciation; and whose personal character formed one of the most noble of all moral examples.

## CLEVER WOMEN.

THERE is an unaccountable antipathy to clever women. Almost all men profess to be afraid of blue stockings—that is, of women who have cultivated their minds; and hold up as a maxim, that there is no safety in matrimony, or even in the ordinary intercourse of society, except with females of plain understandings. The general idea seems to be, that a dull ordinary woman, or even a fool, is more easily managed than a woman of spirit and sense, and that the acquirements of the husband ought never to be obviously inferior to those of his wife. If these propositions were true, there would be some shew of reason for avoiding clever women. But I am afraid they rest on no good grounds. Hardly any kind of fool can be so easily managed, as a person of even first-rate intellect; while the most of the species are much more untractable. A dull fool is sure to be obstinate—obstinate in error as well as in propriety; so that the husband is every day provoked to find that she wilfully withholds him from acting rightly in the most trifling, and perhaps also the most important, things. Then the volatile fool is full of whim and caprice, and utterly defies every attempt that may be made by her husband to guide her aright. In the one case, his life is embittered for days, perhaps, by the sulkiness of his partner; in the other, he is chagrined by the fatal consequences of her levity. Are these results so much to be desired, that a man should marry beneath the rank of his own understanding, in order to secure them? I rather apprehend that cowardice in this case, as in most others, is only the readiest way to danger. As for the rest of the argument, I would be far from saying, that to marry a woman much superior to one's self in intellect, is a direct way to happiness. I must insist, however, that there is more safety for a man of well-regulated feelings, in the partnership of a superior than of an inferior woman. In the former case, I verily believe, his own understanding is likely to be more highly estimated than in the other. In the first place, he is allowed the credit of having had the sense at least to choose a good wife. In the second, he has counsel and example always at hand, for the improvement of his own appearances before society. The very superiority, however, of his wife, ensures that she will be above shewing off to the disadvantage of her husband: she will rather seek to conceal his faults, and supply his deficiencies, for her own credit. Now, what sense a fool has, she must always shew it, even though sure to excite ridicule from its being so little.

These arguments, which every reflecting person will be able to confirm by examples within his own range of observation, refer only to the immediate comfort of the husband. There are, however, other considerations. Will any man say that a woman of plain or inferior understanding is likely to educate her children as well as a person of superior intellect? He must be fond of dullness, indeed, who will advance such a proposition. The truth is, that, for the sake of her children alone, a woman can hardly be too well informed, or possessed of too much talent. The whole formation of the mental character of the family, and consequently their interests in future life, depend upon her; and it is therefore perhaps of more importance that she should possess a cultivated understanding, than that her

husband should be so gifted—and this both to the husband himself, whose interests are identified with those of his children, and to the world at large.

This argument derives great force from the observations that have been made upon what I will call the *descent of intellect*. It is the most trite of all proverbs, that "a wise father may have a foolish son;" and nothing can be more obvious than the fact, that men of distinguished ability rarely find a match in their representatives. On the other hand, the mothers of distinguished men are almost universally found to have been women of a superior order, either in natural or acquired gifts. To explain this, some philosophic minds have suggested, that talent is inherited exclusively from the mother, and temper only from the father. Besides the specific facts which might be advanced in support of this theory, there is one strong general argument in favour of it. Talent, if of natural descent, would remain continually fixed in certain families, so as to give them a greater ascendancy over their fellows, than what is consistent with the general comfort of mankind. But, by descending through females, it is carried from one family into another, remaining no long period in any; so that all have a chance in the course of a few generations. In short, by this means, talent acquires a dispersive or diffusive property, which it could not have if limited to heirs-male.

Now, whether the mother gives inherent ability, or only good nurture, it is obvious that her talents must be a matter of infinite importance to her husband, and that, the greater they are, so much the more certain are his welfare and happiness. If the reader will accept of opinion instead of argument, I will tell him exactly what I think upon the subject. Intellect being, in my opinion, a decided good, and the want of it an evil, I think that its existence in woman makes her just so much the more valuable, both in respect of general society, and in regard to the advantage of her children. Folly and dullness are less negative properties than some people suppose; and tend, in my opinion, to have an active and positive effect in diminishing the comfort of existence; therefore they ought to be avoided in women. Let no man tell me that a very clever woman may be too good for her business, or above grappling with it. Depend upon it, excess of ability is the safe side of the question. Neither let me be told that a plain man is in danger of not showing well off beside his clever wife. He will find, on trying, that it takes a great deal of cleverness in a woman to match with the same apparent degree of it in a man, and that, in the long run, he is not nearly so far behind as he first supposed. By pitching, on the other hand, only a little beneath his own supposed intellect, he is apt to discover that his partner is in reality an immense distance in the rear.

It is a lamentable truth, that far more things are laughed at, in this world, than what are really ridiculous. It is so easy to laugh at any thing, that there is no wonder that some things are mistreated in this respect. Among the number of respectable things which the world has agreed to laugh at are *blue-stockings*,—such is the silly name given to women who aim at cultivating their intellects in a manner superior to their neighbours. Now, for my part, I cannot see that woman, in the middle and upper ranks of life, can be a whit the worse for general information. The intellects of women are not so much inferior, naturally, to those of the male sex, as they are rendered inferior by neglected education, and by the weaknesses to which they are liable, in consequence of being called upon so imperatively to cultivate personal graces. If these intellects, then, can be reclaimed from trifles, and directed to solidly useful pursuits, I cannot see what evil can flow from it. Perhaps, in a very humble rank, any thing that would make a wife less willing to perform servile drudgery would be a decided evil. But what is there in the duties of women in the middle and upper ranks, that can be

supposed incompatible with the cultivation of the intellect? It rather appears to me, that, in these ranks of life, every hour spent by women in mental exercise, is just so much waste time redeemed from idleness or folly.

## NATURAL HISTORY.\*

"He," says the great Linnæus, "who does not make himself acquainted with God from the consideration of Nature, will scarcely acquire knowledge of him from any other source; for if we have no faith in the things which are seen, how shall we believe those things which are not seen?"

One of the most useful lessons we derive from the study of Nature, is to know and acknowledge the Author of Nature, which are inculcated by the religion and morality of every civilized people. The history of the world shews that most nations have had some method of — what they considered—knowing the great Author of the universe, and have had some particular reasons which they assigned for loving and reverencing him. In short, Natural History, or the study of nature, may be reckoned as the parent of natural religion.

Without any consideration for that knowledge of the ALL-WISE which we derive from revelation, the study and reflection which arise from seeking after the wonders of what are termed *natural objects*, leads us to a knowledge of the Author of Nature. Every step we advance in pursuit of these inquiries—the astonishing skill and contrivance manifested in his works, call forth our wonder and admiration of the superhuman power and wisdom displayed in the general system and particular contrivance of the world, and its various details.

For this reason, the knowledge of the Author of Nature, through his works, may be designated the universal religion, as the love of fitness, induced by a taste for facts, may be termed the universal morality. Neither of these interfere with the religion or morality of any particular country.

This, then, is the first and chief use of the study of Nature, which teaches us to look from Nature up to Him who formed the universe, and who imparts the living principle to the lowest degree of animal existence.

An extensive knowledge of natural objects, either in individuals or in a nation, cannot exist without producing great and corresponding improvements in taste, literature, and in the elegant arts. A correct knowledge of natural objects will elicit greater accuracy in the delineation of them, both in the artist and the man of letters. It is well known that the public taste is gradually, nay rapidly improving as regards painting, sculpture, and architecture; and no inconsiderable portion of the improvement will be found to be attributable to the more correct representation of natural objects. This improvement has also extended itself to our manufactures, more especially to the figures printed on cotton, paper, and earthenware; the great superiority in these is acknowledged chiefly to consist in the more correct imitation of plants, animals, and general scenery.

With what attractive charms this goodly frame  
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts  
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores  
Which beauteous imitation thence derives  
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil.

ANAPNEIX.

What utility, pleasure, or instruction, can a reflecting people derive from the representations of beings which never had an existence—the imaginings of the heathens? It is indisputable, that no solid use is to accrue from beholding a hippogriff, a pegasus, a phoenix, a griffin, a dragon, and fifty more such fictitious animals, which have so long held sway in the ornamental parts of architecture. To the classical student who knows nothing of the beauties of creation, these may call up certain associations, but they are looked at, thrown aside and treated with contempt by the lover of nature. As natural history consists in an accumulation of facts, and to trace the *true character* of every object in Nature is the province and the delight of the disciples of Nature; so every thing which is detected as departing from the truth, must create rather disgust than pleasure in those who are accustomed to search after it.

The study of mineral substances is of the greatest importance, for we are by means of them led to the improvement of all the useful arts. What would civilized man be with-

\* We have much pleasure in announcing this as the first of a series of papers on natural history, from a gentleman who has distinguished himself by his writings on that branch of science.

out iron? An acquaintance with the different strata which compose the earth's crust, enables us to detect the localities of coal and other useful minerals. Hence the importance of this species of knowledge in working mines and quarries; and an acquaintance with geology adds greatly to the interest of the traveller in passing through a country. It besides enables us to draw some deductions from the changes which have evidently taken place on the earth's surface.

Having said thus much of the utility of the study of Nature, we now turn to the pleasure to be derived from a pursuit of it. We must in the first place premise, that we consider all knowledge to be pleasure, as well as power, and that in the pursuit of pleasure, the reward obtained will be commensurate with the labour bestowed. These are facts which the reason and experience of ages have incontrovertibly established, and ought to be treasured up in the mind of every young person, as perpetual incitements to exertion.

From this, however, we would not wish the young student to imagine, that very great mental exertion is required in the study of natural history, for the very reverse is the fact. The principal thing required is a good memory and a correct eye, both of which can be wonderfully improved by practice. It is the want of attention alone which makes the discrimination of objects appear a difficult task; for no sooner do we become acquainted with the trivial distinctions, than we are surprised to find how easy it is to recollect them; and things which appeared wrapped in mystery, now become obvious and familiar to us. It is the mere want of knowledge of the plain and simple means pursued by the naturalist, that has all along prevented thousands from following this, one of the most delightful and instructive exercises of the reasoning faculties; and such are the charms which it carries along with it, that almost all who once take to the study become zealous.

It is our intention to introduce a series of essays containing elementary instruction in the different departments of the system of Nature, and rendered in language which can be understood by every body; a certain number of technical terms are, however, indispensable, but which can easily be acquired.

We have said that want of attention alone makes the task of discriminating natural objects difficult, and we shall beg to be indulged in a very simple and familiar illustration of this fact.

There is scarcely a human being who is not acquainted with the general appearance of a sheep. We have looked upon hundreds of them hundreds of times, and yet, strange to tell, we have not acquired an intimate knowledge of their appearance; nor can we discriminate one from another, although they are as unlike each other as are individuals of the human race. Let one be picked out from a flock of five hundred, nay, even one hundred, and let us examine it for half an hour most attentively, and then set it at liberty again amongst its fellows; the chances are five hundred to one against us, that we shall never be able to find out the identical sheep. But let the experiment be tried with a shepherd, and he will, in a few minutes, detect the sheep, although set at liberty amongst thousands. And he requires no uncommon sagacity to be able to do so; for, on the contrary, there is scarcely a man exercising the calling, who will not readily perform this easy task. So is it with the study of Nature; a little attention and experience will soon render any object familiar and comparatively simple to the student.

The young student, who aspires to become a zoologist, a botanist, or a geologist, need not, therefore, be discouraged, from attempting to obtain his share of the superior delight which scientific knowledge can afford, by the obstacles which, only in appearance, oppose the acquirement.

Every step in the pursuit produces a reward and gratification in exact proportion to the difficulty, and each advantage thus gained produces fresh excitement to proceed in the path of science. Let us draw our illustration from the vegetable kingdom. For example, every plant of which we acquire a knowledge by sight and name, so as to be able to recognize it in another locality, not only gives a distinct pleasure at first, but the pleasure is renewed and increased, when we meet it for the second and third time, probably under very different circumstances, either as relate to ourselves, or to the plant. Thus, even the simple knowledge of their names, which enables us to communicate our ideas, although in an indistinct manner, brings with it sensations of a pleasurable kind, and often proves a source of the most interesting associations. But the pleasure we derive from a knowledge of the trivial names of plants, becomes greatly enhanced by more extended views regarding them, which are not strictly botanical. We are astonished when we study their geological relation in any particular district or country; their geographical distribution, relatively to the world itself, or their migration from one country to another; their connection with climate; their being domestic plants, which follow man in his improvement and change of soil, or wanderers seeking to inhabit distant and before uninhabited regions by their kinds, or by their being social, living, like man, in large communities; their abundance or rarity; their mode of propagation; their natural enemies, or more kindly friends; and, lastly, their properties, functions, uses, and culture. It is in a knowledge of all these that real pleasure is experienced; and, as we acquire this knowledge, our desire to become still farther acquainted with them increases.

To know any natural object, however, does not merely consist in having seen it, or in recollecting its name. For we cannot be justly said to be acquainted with a plant till we know its rank in the vegetable kingdom, its structure, habit, with all the other circumstances above hinted at.

There is hardly a child who cannot at once name a ranunculus, or tulip; but how few, even, who cultivate these deservedly admired productions of the garden, are aware that these two plants, however nearly they may be allied as fine flowers, are very different, in point of rank, in the scale of vegetable creation. They belong to separate fundamental divisions of plants, and the organization of the one is much more perfect than that of the other. They display totally different characters of structure and physiological economy, from the seminal embryo through every stage to the perfect plant. The ranunculus belongs to a division of plants characterized by a reticulated, or net-like structure in their parts. It will admit of portions of its leaves being broken, or cut off, without impeding the remainder of the leaf in the performance of its functions; or, in other words, the leaf will continue to grow, and arrive at a state of maturity, although deprived of a portion, or limb. Now, the tulip belongs to a division, the structure of whose fibres are parallel, and will not admit of part of the leaves, more particularly their extremities, being cut off, without impeding their functions, and, consequently, injuring the present health of the plant, and affecting its vigour for the following year. Here, then, we have another example of the utility of natural knowledge; for, any one who has paid the slightest attention to the anatomy or physiology of plants, will at once be able to know the distinctive structures of these two divisions; and, if only a part of a leaf is presented to him, the division to which it belongs will immediately be detected by him, and, by consequence, the culture, and general management of the plant, so far as regards its most important organs; for leaves are analogous to the lungs of animals. Thus we have the increased pleasure of not only knowing the plant by its name, but also its rank in vegetable physiology, and the manner in which its various functions are exercised.

One of the most extraordinary phenomena in nature is the endless variety of forms in the distinct species of animals, plants, and minerals; and still more wonderful is the infinite modifications of form in the same species. For it is our conviction, that, since the creation of the world down to the present time, there never have been two individuals of the same kind formed exactly alike in all their parts. This leads us naturally to an expression of our admiration of the works of Providence, in the words of the Psalmist, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all!"

This idea is sublime; and however erroneous it may appear to those who have not deeply studied Nature, we firmly believe that it is nevertheless true. Let us illustrate this by another example from the vegetable kingdom. Behold the stately oak of the forest, spreading his branches afar on every side, who has reared and shed his millions of leaves for a series of hundreds of years, but never has produced two leaves exactly alike; and yet a general similarity of form has been, and will be, maintained to the end of time! Let any one who is sceptical on this point repair to the forest, and patiently examine every leaf which has clothed one of its largest oaks, and he will never be able to find two of them perfectly alike in size, shape, and particular structure; nay, he may extend his search to all the oaks of a forest, and he will discover that he has been seeking for that which, like the philosopher's stone, will never be found. So it is with all the works of creation, whether animate or inanimate, which strongly manifests the profound wisdom of the Creator and Preserver of the universe. One uniform and fundamental plan has been established, alike in its grand leading principles, but exceedingly varied in its detail. Let us for a moment suppose that all mankind were formed exactly similar. What would be the consequence? Endless monotony, confusion, and crime. The variety of form and intellect in the human species, creates in us those varied sensations of pleasure which are derived from the admiration and love of one object beyond that of another for some real or fancied quality. If all were alike, the love of one particular object could not exist, and a disgusting monotony would every where surround us, and man would not know his own wife nor the child its parent; perpetual scenes of confusion would prevail, and crime could not be traced to its perpetrators. There would be a total want of those varied sentiments which hold their sway over the human heart, and from which emanate everything that is pleasurable in existence. It has, however, pleased the dispenser of good to order every thing otherwise; and we now behold the world one vast machine, infinitely varied in its parts, but all of them tending to the furtherance of one mighty design.

The study of Nature teaches us to discover that, in the animal kingdom, there seems to be one great chain of being, from man down to the lowest scale of animated existence; and it is not impossible but this may prevail even through the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, although man has been hitherto unable to detect the connecting links.

Each shell, each crawling insect holds a rank important in the plan of Him who form'd  
This scale of beings; holds a rank, which lost,  
Would break the chain, and leave behind a gap  
Which Nature's self would rue.

STILLINGFLEET.

Natural History is a study calculated in an especial manner for elevating the character of the labouring classes of society. Indeed, it may be said to be a study which most labourers and mechanics are already engaged in, for their implements, and the material which they manufacture, are all derived from the field of Nature and only modified by the experience of man from his knowledge of several qualities which appertain to each. Besides, it requires less preliminary information than almost any other branch of study; and even the humblest individual has within his reach the means of contemplating Nature in one form or other. And it is a much more rational manner of spending time than in dissipation, which debases the mind and undermines the constitution. While other branches of study have the effect of improving the reasoning powers of the mind, natural history may be said to improve and humanize the whole man. The intimate connection between moral conduct and the love of animals and plants, will be thought intimate or remote according to the ideas of different individuals; but the more we consider and trace the design and purpose of the works of creation, shall we not sympathize the more with the fitness of man to the ends of human conduct? The deeper we enter into the details of nature, shall we not increase our relish for facts? which is nothing less than laying the foundation of justice and honesty.

Even those who have no knowledge of scientific zoology, derive great pleasure from their observations on the manifest variety in the forms, habits, and instincts of animals. And mankind are accustomed from these observations to transfer to some of the higher quadrupeds many of the virtues of humanity. We speak of the courage of the horse, the generosity of the lion, the sagacity of the dog, and the innocence of the lamb; we are delighted with the melody of the songsters of the grove; the industry of the bee holds up to man a useful lesson; the gay attire of the butterfly pleases us; and the noxious and disgusting appearance of various reptiles excite in us varied emotions. But all these are nothing when put in comparison with the pleasure derived by the scientific zoologist. He who can trace the varied degrees of power and intelligence imparted by the Supreme Being to animals, from intellectual man down to the lowest animalcule, and who knows scientifically that man is the most perfect of all animals, enjoys a degree of exalted pleasure which scientific knowledge alone can impart.

#### THE RED MANTLE.—A TALE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

MANY years before the beginning of the thirty years' war, a young artisan of Bremen, travelling to perfect himself in his trade, entered a little market town, not far distant from the frontiers of the Netherlands, one evening after a long day's journey. Every corner of the inn was already taken possession of by a caravan of waggons; and the landlord, who thought, perhaps, he discovered something of the *landlowner* in his frank, care-defying countenance, advised him, without much circumlocution, to walk on to the next village. Our weary traveller had nothing for it but to take his bundle on his back again, muttering all the while curses on this hard-hearted publican between his teeth.

All of a sudden the host seemed to be seized with a fit of compassion. "Hark ye, my lad," he cried, "upon second thoughts, I think I can stow ye away for the night. There is room enough in the castle there; it is not inhabited, and I have the key." In this offer, which Frank (that was our hero's name) gladly accepted, there was, however, more of the shew than the substance of kindness. The knavish host had suspected the nature of the stranger's complimentary expressions, and resolved to revenge himself by the agency of a roistering spirit which haunted the castle.

The residence of which he spoke stood upon an abrupt hill, which overhung the town, straight before the door of the inn, from which it was only separated by the road, and a small trouting stream. On account of its pleasant situation, it was still kept in repair and well furnished, and employed by its owner as a hunting-box. He used it, however, only in the day time. As soon as the stars shewed themselves, he marched out with all his attendants, to avoid the tricks played upon them at night by the ghost,—for by day it was quiet enough.

The sun had gone down, and a dark night set in, when Frank reached the door of the old building, under the guidance of mine host, who carried a good supper and a bottle of wine in a basket. He had also brought along with him two candlesticks and a pair of wax tapers; for as no one dared to await the approach of twilight in the castle, all such moveables had been discarded as useless. By the way, Frank cast more than one anxious glance at these costly preparations, for he remembered the low state of his finances. "The light in the lantern is enough to shew me to bed, and I am too sleepy to be long of finding my way thither. By the time I awake, the sun will be up."



"I will not conceal from you," replied the host, "that there is a report of the castle's being haunted. But never fear, you see we are within call if any thing should happen. The household will be astir this whole blessed night; and, after all, I have lived in the place for thirty years, and never have seen any thing. I have heard noises to be sure, but they must have come from the cats and mice in the granary. In case of the worst, however, I have brought these lights, for we know that ghosts always shun them."

It was no lie that he had never seen a ghost in the castle; for he had taken precious care never to set a foot in it after sunset. Even on this occasion, he kept on the safe side of the door, handing the victuals to his guest, describing the way to the state apartments, and galloping down hill to the imminent hazard of his neck. Frank stepped fearlessly into the deserted abode, firmly convinced that the story of the ghost was mere nonsense. He had been advised by a wise man, when he set out on his journey, never to believe more than one-half of what he heard, and experience had taught him to disbelieve the other.

Following the landlord's directions, he mounted a spiral staircase, and reached a door which he opened with the key. A long sombre gallery, which echoed again to his sounding steps, brought him to a stately hall, out of which he passed by a side door into a suite of apartments, furnished with the utmost luxury and elegance. He selected for his bedroom the most cheerful, from the windows of which he looked down upon the inn, and could hear every word that was spoken there. He lighted his wax candles, set himself to supper, and ate with the relish and composure of a nobleman of Otaheite. The big-bellied bottle guaranteed him against thirst. As long as his teeth were busied, he never once thought of the ghost. If at some distant noise timidity would cry, "There it comes," courage instantly answered, "Nonsense! it's the cats and rats battling." But, during the half-hour of digestion, terror whispered three anxious suggestions in his ear, for one answer that courage was able to frame.

He took care to shut and bolt the door before fear had completely mastered him, and sat down upon a seat in the bow-window. He opened the lattice, and in order to dissipate the thick-coming fancies that were creeping over him, he looked to the skies, examined the physiognomy of the moon, and counted how often the stars were snuffed.\* The street beneath him was deserted, and notwithstanding mine host's story of the nightly bustle in his inn, the door was shut, the lights were extinguished, and every thing was quiet as a churchyard. The night-watch blew his horn, and filled the whole air with his sonorous voice as he announced the hour—so directly under the window, that Frank might have held a conversation with him, for company's sake, if there had been any chance of the dignitary's venturing to abide a challenge from so suspicious a locality.

It may be a pleasing recreation to philosophize on the pleasures of solitude in a populous city, full of bustle as a bee-hive; to represent her as the loveliest playmate of man, exaggerate all her most winning features, and sigh for her embrace. But in her native home, in some deep wood, or old deserted castle, where desolate walls and vaults awaken horror, and nothing breathes the breath of life save the melancholy owl—she is by no means the most agreeable companion for the timid night-wanderer, especially if he is in momentary expectation of a visit from a ghost. In such a situation, a conversation with the watchman from the window may have more attractions than the perusal of the most pathetic eulogy of solitude. Had Mr. Zimmerman chanced to find himself in our hero's situation, in Castle Rummelsburg, on the Westphalian frontier, he would have gained excellent hints for a much more interesting treatise on Solitude than that which, in all probability, some tiresome assembly set him to write about Solitude.

Midnight is the name of the hour at which the spiritual world awakes to life and activity, when grosser animal nature lies buried in deep slumber. Frank naturally preferred getting over that anxious period in his sleep; so he shut the window, made once more the round of the apartment, peeped into every nook and corner, snuffed the candles that they might give more light, and stretched himself upon the bed, which felt extremely soft to his weary limbs. He could not, however, fall asleep so soon as he wished. A slight palpitation of the heart, which he attributed to a degree of feverishness caused by the extreme heat of the day, kept him awake for a short time, which he employed in uttering a more earnest prayer than he had said for a long time. This exercise had its usual effect; it was followed by a sweet sleep. An hour might have elapsed, when he awoke with a sudden fright—nothing uncommon when the blood is fevered. He heard the clock strike twelve—an event which was immediately announced by the watchman to the whole town. Frank listened for a while, then turned himself warmly in bed, and was about to address himself again to sleep, when he heard, in the distance as it were, the creaking of a door, and immediately thereafter a heavy

sound, as if it had been violently banged to. "O mercy, mercy!" thought he, "here comes the ghost. Pooh! it is only the wind." But the sound came nearer and nearer like the heavy tread of a man. There was a jingling accompaniment, as from a convict's chain or a porter's bunch of keys. It was no passing gust of wind; the blood rushed to his heart till it thumped like a smith's hammer.

The affair was now past a joke. Had terror allowed the poor terrified youth to recollect his treaty with the innkeeper, he would have rushed to the window and bawled lustily for assistance. As he was, however, too irresolute for such a decided measure, he betook himself to the mattress—the last refuge of the terrified—on the same principle that the ostrich thrusts its head into some thicket when it can no longer fly before the huntsman. But without, one door after another was opened and shut with a dreadful clatter. At last it came to the sleeping apartment. There was a rattling and shaking at the door, many keys were tried at last the right one was found, but still the bolt held; so a sturdy kick, which resounded in Frank's ears like a clap of thunder, was applied—away crashed the bolt, and the door flew wide to the wall. A tall thin man, with a black beard, in an antique costume, and with a gloomy expression of countenance, entered. His eyebrows were contracted into an expression of sullen solemnity. He wore a scarlet mantle depending over his left shoulder, and a high-peaked hat on his head. He crossed the chamber three times with slow heavy tread, looked at the candles, and snuffed them. He then threw off his mantle, took from his side a barber's pouch, took out the shaving apparatus, and drew his glittering razor busily along the strap he carried at his girdle.

Frank lay all this while sweating under the mattress, recommending himself to the Virgin's protection, and speculating regarding the comparative probability of this manoeuvre having reference to his beard or his throat. To his unspeakable consolation, the spectre, having poured water out of a silver flask into a silver basin, whisked up a lather with his skinny hand, placed a chair, and solemnly beckoned the trembling spy upon his actions to come from his hiding place.

It was as impossible to remonstrate against this hint as for an exiled vizier to resist the angel of death, which the sultan sends after him in the shape of a bowstring. In such extreme cases, the most rational line of conduct is, of course, to yield to necessity, smile at the disagreeable joke, and acquiesce in the operation of strangling. Frank honoured the draft upon his obedience, threw away the mattress, sprang from the bed, and took his place upon the chair. Wonderful as this sudden transition from terror to resolution may appear, the editor of the Psychological Journal will no doubt be able to explain it in the turning of a straw.

The spectral barber tied a cloth round the neck of his trembling customer, seized comb and scissors, and clipped away at his hair and beard. He then soaped in the most scientific manner, first his chin, then his eyebrows, and finally, the whole head, after which he shaved him from the crown to the throat, as bare as a scull. Having finished the job, he washed the head, dried it carefully, made his bow, tied up his apparatus, wrapped himself up in his cloak, and prepared to depart. Frank was not a little annoyed at the loss of his flowing locks, nevertheless he breathed more freely, for he felt as if the incubus had done all he was permitted to do.

It was so, indeed. Redmantle retired, dumb as he had approached—a most perfect contrast to his professional brethren of our day. He had not, however, advanced three steps towards the door, when he stopped, looked round with a woful gesture at him he had shaved so well, and stroked his long black beard. He repeated the pantomime when he had reached the door. It now struck Frank that the poor ghost wished a favour at his hands, and a rapid association of ideas suggested that it might wish to be paid in kind.

As the ghost, notwithstanding his woe-begone expression of countenance, appeared more inclined for a jest than any thing serious, all fear had now left its victim. He resolved to obey the suggestion of his fancy, and beckoned to the spectre to assume the seat from which he had just arisen. It obeyed instantly, threw off its red mantle, placed the shaving apparatus on the table, and seated itself in the attitude of a man who wishes to get quit of his beard. Frank followed exactly the routine which had been observed in his case, clipped the beard and hair, lathered the whole head, his ghostship sitting the whole time as steady as a barber's block. The awkward wight was but a bad hand at the razor, (he never before had touched one,) so he shaved the beard against the hair, whereby the ghost made as strange grimaces as the ape of Erasmus, when he emulated his master in the self-infliction of the same delicate operation. The inexperienced blunderer began to feel strange, and thought of the proverb, "Let the shoemaker stick to his last." He put, however, a good countenance on the matter, and shaved the spectre as bald as himself.

Up to this moment, the business had been conducted on the footing of a pantomime. "Stranger," said the unearthly being, with a graceful and cordial bow, "accept my best thanks for the service you have done me. Through your means am I at last freed from the long imprisonment within this withered and marrowless frame, to which my soul has been doomed on account of my misdeeds."

"Know that these walls were once inhabited by a reckless lord, who gratified his whims alike at the expense

of clergy and laity. Count Hartmann was his name; he was no man's friend, acknowledged no law, no master, and was unrestrained in his humours even by the sacred laws of hospitality. He allowed no stranger, who sought the shelter of his roof, no beggar who came for charity, to depart, without playing them some ill-natured trick. I was his barber, and the creature of his moods. It was my custom to inveigle every pious pilgrim who passed into the castle, and when he expected princely treatment, to shave him bald, and turn him with mockery from the door. Then Count Hartmann would look from his window, and see with delight how the viper's brood of village boys mocked the abused saints, calling them bald head. Then the old practical joker laughed till his huge belly shook again, and his eyes swam in tears.

One day there came a holy man from far away countries: he carried a heavy cross on his shoulder, and had, out of devotion, pierced his feet and hands with nails; his hair was trimmed so as to resemble the crown of thorns. He begged, in passing, for some water to his feet, and a bit of bread." I led him in, and, profane wretch that I was, shaved away his sacred circlet of hair. Then the pious pilgrim spoke a heavy curse over me. "Know, evil doer, that, after death, heaven and hell, and purgatory itself, shall alike be shut against thy soul. It shall haunt these walls, teasing every one as in life was their pleasure, until some wanderer, more bold than his fellows, shall dare, undesired, to retaliate."

"I fell sick immediately, the marrow dried in my bones, and I withered away to the shadow you see. In vain did I wait for relief: for know, when the bond between life and the soul has been snapped, it longs, with a lover's longing, for the place of rest; and this intense passion turns its years to eternities. To my own torture was I now obliged to carry on the joke, which, during my life, was a source of pleasure to me. Alas! my mischievous pranks soon drove every human being from the house. At long intervals only some stray pilgrim would pass the night here. I served them all exactly as I have done you, but none of them dared return the compliment, and free me from my slavery. The castle is now freed from my nightly pranks,—what a sleep I shall have! Again receive my thanks, young stranger. Were I the guardian of concealed treasures, I would freely yield them all to thee, but I was in my life nothing more than a poor barber. But listen to my prayer, and when you return to your home, get a couple of masses read for my soul's sake."

With these words he disappeared, having fully vindicated by his talkativeness his claim to the title of *credent* barber to the noble master of Castle Rummelsburg. His liberator remained full of wonder at the strange adventure. He tried to persuade himself it was all a dream, but his bald pate was too decisive an argument to be called in question. Having made up his mind on this weighty matter, he crept back to bed, and, fatigued by his terror yet more than by his journey, slept like a top till next mid-day.

The treacherous landlord was stirring with the dawn, that he might not miss his opportunity of laughing in his sleeve at the stranger, under the pretence of condoling with him. By the time mid-day had arrived, he began to feel anxious; the ghost might have strangled the poor youth, or frightened him to death, and Boniface had never dreamt of stretching his revenge so far. He assembled the *posse comitatus* of his household, marched up to the castle, and made straight for the chamber, in the window of which he had observed the stranger's light burning. He found a strange old-fashioned key in the lock, but the door was barred within; this Frank had taken care to do immediately after the ghost's departure. Mine host drummed on the door with a hubbub of feet, hands, head, and shoulders, that might have awakened the seven sleepers. Frank's first idea, which crossed him as he rubbed his eyes, was, that the barber had returned. As soon, however, as he heard the landlord's whimpering entreaty, that his guest would condescend to give a sign that he was alive, he collected himself, and opened the door.

The landlord clasped his hands above his head, with an affection of astonishment. "By the whole regiment of saints! Redmantle!" (the spectre was known among the inhabitants by this name) "has been here, and made a bald pate of you. I see now that the old story is no fable. Now, tell me, how did he look? what said he? and what has he done?" Frank, who saw through the speaker, replied: "The ghost resembled a man in a red mantle; what he has done you see; and what he said, that I remember well. 'Stranger,' said he to me, 'trust no knavish landlord—the rascal down the way knew right well what was awaiting you. Farewell, I am quitting these quarters, for my time is out. I am now to change my character for that of a noiseless mischief-maker, and as for the landlord, I will tease him incessantly, nip his nose, pull his hair, sit on his breast like a night-mare, if he do not, in return for his treatment of you, allow free roof-field, and the run of his larder, until brown ringlets again twine themselves round your temples.'"

The host trembled at these words, made the sign of the cross in double quick time, and swore by the Virgin, to say nothing of a round dozen of saints whom he threw into the bargain, that he would board and feed our adventurer for nothing, so long as he chose to remain. He would have conducted him immediately to the inn, but Frank preferred the baronial apartments. A devil from the town ventured to keep him company over night, and escaped the shaving, which, in former days

\* The meteors called shooting stars are, in the popular mythology of some districts of Germany, believed to be the snuff of the bright candles of the firmament, thrown away instead of being put into a pair of snuffers.

would have been his reward. The owner of the castle, rejoiced to find it once more inhabitable, gave directions that the stranger should be well cared for.

When the grapes began to colour, and the apples to blush, Frank's brown locks were again in a condition to be seen. He packed up his knapsack, and prepared for his departure. When he took leave of the landlord, that worthy led from the stable a stout roadster, duly caparisoned, which the lord of the manor presented to him, out of gratitude that he had driven the devil from his house. The gift was accompanied by a good fat purse, and by their united aid, our hero in a short time reached his native town in good condition.—*Edinburgh Literary Journal.*

## BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

Humphry Davy was born at Penzance, in Cornwall, on the 17th December, 1778. From his earliest years, he evinced the possession of uncommon endowments. He was passionately enamoured of the muses; and at twelve years of age, had actually completed an epic poem. Several of his poetical productions, which are still extant, and bear a later date, display rare fancy and surprising maturity of intellect. It is not at all to be wondered at, that the discoverer of the Safety Lamp should have been a poet in his youth. His splendid achievements in science were not more the result of a penetrating intellect, than a discursive imagination. It is pleasing to know, that, in after years his first love was not forgotten, but that, at intervals, when his mind relaxed from abstruse research, fancy, like the daughter of Ceres, was sometimes permitted to revisit her native bowers.

In 1795, Davy was articled to a surgeon and apothecary in Penzance. One of his first experiments, as far as can now be ascertained, was for the purpose of discovering the quality of the air contained in the bladders of sea-weed. His instruments were supplied by his own ingenuity. In the contrivance of apparatus, and invention of expedients, he thus early evinced great proficiency; and in after years, it is allowed by the scientific world, that, in this respect, as well as in others, he stood altogether unrivalled. The most fortunate occurrence of his novitiate, was his introduction to Mr. Davies Giddy, (afterwards Mr. Gilbert,) late president of the Royal Society. This worthy individual early appreciated the genius of Davy; and besides many other services which, at this period of the young philosopher's career, were of great importance to him, he procured his admission into the Pneumatic Institution of Bristol, as an assistant to Dr. Beddoes, in the experiments of the laboratory.

In October, 1798, Davy quitted Penzance for Bristol, having then scarcely attained his twentieth year. It was during his connection with Dr. Beddoes, that Davy pursued a series of the most hazardous experiments on record,—those upon nitrous oxide.\* He inhaled this gas, literally at the risk of filling his lungs with *aqua fortis*. It was discovered, that it acted in the first instance as a stimulus, giving rise to highly pleasurable sensations, analogous to those experienced in the first stage of intoxication. Muscular power was increased, and an irresistible propensity to action was indulged in. Amongst those who were favoured with a draught of this "emphyreal air," were the poets, Southey and Coleridge, who have both described their sensations in glowing terms. An almost invariable effect of inhaling this gas, is a propensity to loud laughter. Mr. Tobin, the brother of the dramatist, after inhaling it, started from his chair, struck, in good humour, however, at those around him, and then ran wildly through the different apartments of the house. Like the wit of Sir John Falstaff, the laughter of these philosophers is the cause of laughter in others. There is something irresistibly ludicrous in the exhibition of a number of grave and gifted men, with silk bags, (in which was contained the inspiring fluid,) tied to their mouths, bellowing, stamping, and flying round the apartment, as if "all bedlam or Parnassus were let out."

Davy, however, pushed his researches to extremity; and, in breathing the gas in a concentrated state, *aqua fortis* was actually formed in his mouth! His attempts to breathe carburetted hydrogen, (the gas used in lighting the streets,) and also carbonic acid gas, or fixed, were equally daring and terrific. The eclat which followed the publication of these investigations, spread the fame of the young philosopher. At this period the Royal Institution had just been formed; and Davy was invited to take the situation of assistant professor of chemistry, and director of the laboratory. He accepted that offer; and on the 11th of March, 1801, entered upon the scene of his future glory and triumph.

Only a few weeks had elapsed in this new sphere of exertion when he was appointed by the managers, lecturer in chemistry, instead of assistant. His first lecture was delivered in 1802, and from this period we may date the commencement of his splendid career. He at once succeeded in making a strong impression upon the public mind, and by a series of brilliant and unrivalled discoveries, he was enabled to maintain it to the hour of his death. His discourses were admirably adapted to fascinate his audience, which was composed, not of philosophers alone, but the gay and fashionable of the city, a consider-

able proportion of whom were ladies in the highest walks of life. His experiments, particularly with the voltaic battery, an instrument with which he was destined to work such miracles, rivited universal attention; philosophers admired and applauded, and the softer sex were involved in the most agreeable terrors. His style was highly florid. It largely partook of that poetical inspiration, which, as has been already stated, he so early evinced the possession of. Coleridge the poet, was a constant attendant on the lectures; and has himself declared it was to increase the stock of his metaphors. The goddess of science was divested of all austerity of aspect, and arrayed in the smiles and fascinating attire of the graces. So great was Davy's popularity, that duchesses vied with each other in doing homage to the young scientific Hercules; compliments, invitations, and presents, were showered upon him from all quarters; and no entertainment was considered complete without the presence of the chemical lecturer. All this adulation had its usual effect upon the mind of Davy. His devoted love of science remained unabated to the day of his death; but that simplicity of manners, which he brought with him from the country, and which so endeared him to his friends, was lost to himself and them for ever.

In 1803 he commenced a series of lectures on agriculture, which were continued for several years. These were afterwards published in a connected form, and are considered as forming the most philosophical and valuable work on the subject which has ever appeared. In the same year he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. From this period until 1807, he continued to increase in popularity, making at intervals discoveries which would entitle humbler investigators to an honourable place in the archives of science, but need scarcely be noticed in a life of Davy. His leisure months were spent in the country, sometimes encircled by his relations in the bosom of his native hills, at other times at the seats of noblemen and others; for all ranks delighted to honour him; but wherever he went, angling was his amusement. To this humble recreation he was as passionately attached as Isaac Walton himself; and frequently in company he would, with more satisfaction, boast of his triumph over a large salmon, than of having discovered the safety lamp.

We have now arrived at that period of his brilliant career when he effected those sublime discoveries which have crowned his name with a "peculiar diadem," and associated it with the great master-spirits of every age and country. We allude to his development of the *Laws of Voltaic Electricity*. At the time when Davy delivered his celebrated Bakerian lecture, the subject was involved in great confusion. The most contradictory theories had been repeatedly proposed, and as often abandoned, both in England and on the continent. The phenomena exhibited by the operation of galvanic agency were certainly most perplexing; and hence the greater honour is due to the powerful genius who called from the chaos of isolated facts, a system of beauty and order. But in a limited biography like the present, it is impossible to give a detail of the exact situation in which affairs stood at this eventful period. It is sufficient to say, that Davy brought this department of science to a state of almost absolute perfection. Nay, he may be said to have created, in the same way as Newton is allowed to have explained, the true theory of the universe. Previous philosophers had cleared the way for both—had even obtained a glimpse of the promised land; but it was not their destiny to reach it. Davy opened up a new path for the enterprise of philosophers, a new method of philosophizing. He had extorted from reluctant nature the magic word—the sesame,—at the mention of which her long cherished secrets were to be revealed; and the illustrious chemist himself was the first to profit by it, and enrich science with the discovery of new treasures.

Great as was the effect produced in England by this astounding lecture, it was not equal to the impression which it made upon the savans in Paris. Some idea of this may be formed from the circumstance, that it was crowned by the Institute of France with the prize of the First Consul, and that at a time when the nations mutually entertained the bitterest hostility towards each other, and were at open war. The prize here awarded was one founded by Napoleon when First Consul, for important discoveries in electricity and galvanism.

Having discovered the general principle of voltaic electricity, he proceeded in his investigation of phenomena; and the result was the brilliant and startling discovery that the fixed alkalis have metallic bases. It is well known, that, amongst other substances, potash and soda are, in chemical language, called alkalis. The former of these substances was submitted to the agency of a galvanic battery, and by a variety of ingenious expedients, he succeeded in decomposing it, and obtaining as one of its constituents, small globules of metal resembling quicksilver. Some of these no sooner appeared than they burned with an explosion of bright flame. The difficulty of collecting this new and singular metal was great, from the strong attraction it has for oxygen, one of the gases of which air and water are composed; but, after various trials, he ultimately accomplished his object. Its external character is that of a white metal, instantly tarnishing by exposure to air. It received from its discoverer the appropriate name of *potassium*. When thrown upon water it decomposes that fluid, combining with its oxygen, and an explosion is produced, accompanied with a vehement flame. If ice be substituted for water, potassium burns with a bright rose-coloured flame, and a deep hole is made in the ice, which is found to

contain a solution of potash. The latter substance, then, is a metallic oxide. Soda, and other alkalis, underwent the same rigorous investigation, and with a similar result. Thus, then, the genius of Davy had accomplished what had long baffled the ingenuity of all the philosophers in Europe. The alkalis had been tortured in every possible manner, but in vain. The English philosopher, like his illustrious countryman, Newton, called in new powers and new resources to his aid when the old failed; and Nature, thus cross-examined, at once revealed the truth.

It may easily be conceived with what astonishment and delight these extraordinary discoveries were received. The laboratory of the Institution was continually crowded with persons of every rank and description. All parties contended for the honour of his company at dinner, and the voice of the syren he had not philosophy enough to resist. On his return in the evening, his labours were resumed and continued till three o'clock in the morning. The consequence of such application was a severe fever, which nearly proved fatal. Fortunately for the world, he at last recovered, and set off, with renovated vigour, in his career of discovery. His attention was next directed to the earths, and while in the midst of his investigations, he received a communication from the chemist Berzelius, of Stockholm, informing him of a method of decomposing them. He repeated the experiments with complete success, and embodied them in a Bakerian lecture.

Let us pause a moment, and contemplate the value of such discoveries as the decomposition of the alkalis and earths. They have changed the history of the science, and opened up to our admiration new and important views of the secret workings of Nature. From a more lofty elevation the philosopher can now embrace in his glance a wider horizon, diversified with new and wonderful phenomena. It is probable that they may ultimately lead to a new theory of geology. A flood of light has been reflected upon that science, inasmuch as it has been shewn that agents hitherto unknown may have operated in the formation of the rocks and earths. That the phenomena of volcanoes, lavas, and subterranean heat, have also been placed in a clearer point of view, it is only necessary to introduce an account of an artificial volcano constructed by Davy. "A mountain," says an eye-witness, "had been modelled in clay, and a quantity of the metallic bases introduced into its interior: on water being poured upon it, the metals were soon thrown into violent action—successive explosions followed—red-hot lava was seen flowing down its sides from a crater in miniature—mimic lightning played around—and, in the instant of dramatic illusion, the tumultuous applause and continued cheering of the audience might almost have been regarded as the shouts of the alarmed fugitives of Herculaneum or Pompeii."

Various other investigations engaged his attention, the principle of which was regarding the nature of chlorine, and this he determined was a simple gas, by a variety of admirable experiments. In the years 1810 and 1811, he was invited to Dublin to deliver lectures on chemistry, and other scientific subjects. In 1812 he published his *Elements of Chemical Philosophy*, the most valuable record of discovery which has ever appeared since the *Principia* of Newton. The same year he married Mrs. Apreece, who brought him a large fortune. A day or two previous to this event he was knighted, the first who received the honour from the Prince Regent.

We must pass over his visit to the Continent, and other matters of comparatively trifling moment, and hasten to give an account of the safety lamp—one of the most important benefits that ever science bequeathed to humanity.

A few months after Sir Humphry Davy's return to England, his attention was called to the subject of those terrible explosions of inflammable air, or of fire-damp, in coal mines, which were then of frequent occurrence. He accordingly, with great alacrity, commenced an investigation into the nature of this gas, and in an incredibly short space of time he had invented no less than four different kinds of lamps, all of which might be used with impunity in the foulest atmosphere. To explain the subject simply, it may be stated, that in the course of his researches upon the subject, he made the following discovery—"that if a lamp or candle is surrounded with wire gauze, or metallic plates, perforated with numerous small holes, though the gas or fire-damp may explode within, it will not inflame the surrounding atmosphere without. Upon this principle, accordingly, the safety lamp was formed; and it is needless to say, that it has completely answered the purposes for which it was invented. Sir Humphry also discovered, that if a coil of platinum wire be suspended over the wick of the lamp, although the latter should be extinguished, the former will glow with a light sufficiently strong to guide the miner through the darkness of his perilous subterranean, and that when he reaches a purer atmosphere, the heat will be sometimes sufficient to rekindle his lamp! He was led, by these researches, into some important results regarding the nature of flame; but they are of too abstruse a character to be here introduced.

In the year 1818, Sir Humphry took his departure for Naples, in order to examine the pyri of Herculaneum, and, if possible, discover some method of separating the leaves from each other. His efforts, however, failed, not from want of zeal or ingenuity on his part, but from the state in which the manuscripts were found. He returned to England, and was elected President of the Royal Society. On the 30th November, 1820, he took his seat in the chair of Newton.

\* To those unacquainted with chemistry, it is necessary to explain, that nitrous oxide is a gas, which, when breathed by animals, destroys life in a short time, and that it is nearly the same as *aqua fortis*.



It will be impossible to enumerate all the objects of inquiry which attracted the attention of this indefatigable philosopher during the remainder of his life. The most important was that regarding the corrosive action of sea water upon copper. He commenced his investigations in 1823, and prosecuted them for a considerable period. The truth of his beautiful theory was established; but, strange to say, the remedy failed. There can be little doubt, however, that, had his health continued, he would ultimately have succeeded. But disease began to set its seal upon his frame, and distract his attention from grave studies. He had recourse to his favourite piscatory pursuits, and published a work upon the subject, entitled "Salmonia," one of the most agreeable works ever written, combining profound philosophical reflection, with beautiful description and interesting anecdote.

In 1828, he took his departure for the Continent, in hopes that a milder climate would have some favourable effect upon him; but health was petitioned in vain,—he was destined never to return. The lamp of genius, however, burned bright to the last, as his "Consolations in Travel, or Last Days of a Philosopher," amply evince. This is an extraordinary production, notwithstanding a certain wild extravagance of fancy. It has been truly said by a great poet, that had not Davy been the first philosopher, he would have been the first poet of his day. He continued for some time at Rome, and afterwards proceeded to Geneva, where he expired, on the 29th of May, 1829. He died without issue.

The benefits which science and mankind at large have derived from the labours of Davy it is impossible to calculate, or to speak of in the cold language of philosophy. He is not only the greatest chemist that ever appeared in the world, but, in importance and practical utility, as well as in splendour, his discoveries probably surpass those of all preceding investigators in this branch of science. In proof of this, we need do no more than simply allude to his researches with regard to voltaic electricity and the safety lamp. In investigating both these subjects, he not only displays an ingenuity and tact which appears able to meet every exigency, but a sagacity which seems infallible—an instinct for truth which cannot err. To all who are in the pursuit of science his works should form a *vade mecum*, not only for the discoveries they contain, but for learning the true method of interpreting Nature.

#### THE AYRSHIRE SCULPTOR.

It is universally agreed upon among men of taste, that Sculpture is only calculated for the representation of some precise object or objects, which, in themselves, (that is, without any accompanying objects,) produce an effect upon the mind of the spectator. It is also asserted, that no object is worthy of being thus copied in its external form, unless it be of a highly sentimental character, either in point of beauty, or heroic manliness, or some other, and perhaps severer, grace. Dr. Adam Smith discusses this subject in his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," and instances, by way of illustration, that a kitchen-dresser, covered with dead game, and fish and flesh, though it might make a capital picture, is an unfit subject for sculpture.

This theory is perhaps not to be controverted, but yet it is liable to some occasional exceptions. In the year 1828, a stone mason in Ayrshire, without any education in the art of sculpture, produced two figures of a homely character, which, though thus totally different from the usual subjects of the art, were very generally admired. His figures, which were of the size of life, represented two characters in Burns' poems—Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnnie; and they have since been exhibited with applause, not only in Scotland, where they were apt to be most appreciated, but in every quarter of the united kingdom. As some notice of this untutored artist and his works may be useful in encouraging the efforts of native and untutored genius in other minds, we reprint the following article from a late periodical work, by permission of its author—a gentleman who has made sculpture and painting his particular study for many years.

James Thom, the sculptor of these wonderful figures, is a native of Ayrshire, and of respectable parentage near Tarbolton. Although, like those of his countryman and inspirer, his relatives were all engaged in agricultural pursuits, (his brothers, we understand, possess large farms,) the young man himself preferred the occupation of a mason, and was, accordingly, apprenticed to a craftsman in Kilmaronock. This profession was probably selected as offering the nearest approach to the undefined workings and predilections of his own inexperienced mind, since he was not, as in the instance of several sculptors of eminence, thrown first into the trade of a stone mason by the force of circumstances. This would appear from his shewing little attachment to the drudgery of the art: accordingly, his first master is understood to have pronounced him rather a dull apprentice. From the beginning, he seems to have looked forward to the ornamental part of his calling; and in a country town where there was little or no opportunity of employment in that line, to those more immediately concerned, he might appear less useful than a less aspiring workman. The evidences of young Thom's diligence and talent at this time, however, still remain in numerous specimens of carving in stone, which he himself still considers, we are told, as superior to any thing he has yet done. The seeming errors which even the

greatest men have made in the estimate of their own powers, have been commented upon as proverbial truisms. The causes of these apparent miscalculations have, however, not been taken into account. The artist or the author alone fully knows the difficulties encountered in the execution of any design—the triumphs he achieved over his own mind and means—the obstacles, both external and intellectual, which he had to remove.

His term of apprenticeship being expired, Mr. Thom repaired to Glasgow in pursuit of better employment. Here his merits were immediately perceived, and so well rewarded, that his wages were considerably higher than the ordinary rate.

In his present profession, Mr. Thom's career may be dated from the commencement of the winter of 1827. Being employed at this time in the immediate neighbourhood, he applied to Mr. Auld, of Ayr, who afterwards proved his steady and judicious friend, for permission to take a sketch from a portrait of Burns, with the intention of executing a bust of the poet. This is a good copy of the original picture by Mr. Nasmyth, and is suspended in the very elegant and classical monument, from a design by Mr. Hamilton, erected to the memory of the bard, on the banks of the Doon, near "Allawa's auld haunted kirk." The permission was kindly granted; doubts, however, being at the same time expressed, how far the attempt was likely to prove successful. Mr. Thom not being then known in Ayr.—These doubts seemed to be confirmed, on the latter returning with a very imperfect sketch, taken by placing transparent paper on the picture. These occurrences happened on the Wednesday, consequently nothing could be done till Thursday, when materials were to be procured, and other arrangements made, before the work was absolutely begun. The surprise then may be conceived, on the artist returning on the Monday following with the finished bust. In this work, though somewhat defective as a likeness, the execution, the mechanical details, and the general effect, were wonderful, especially when viewed in connexion with the shortness of the time, and the disadvantage of being finished almost from memory—the very imperfect outline, already mentioned, being the only external guide. It was this general excellence that encouraged the proposal of a full-length figure—a proposal to which the artist gave his ready assent, stating that he had wished to undertake something of the kind, but did not consider it prudent, without any prospect of remuneration, to hazard the expense both of the block of stone and the loss of time. On this Mr. Auld offered to procure any stone from the neighbouring quarries which the artist might judge fit for his purpose. Several days elapsed in this search; in the meantime, the matter was rather laughed at than encouraged; and some apprehensions of failure, and exposure to consequent comments, being expressed, "Perhaps," said the artist, endeavouring to reassure his friends, "I had just better try my hand at a head, as a specimen o' Tam." This being agreed to, he returned to Crosby church-yard, where he was then employed upon a grave-stone. The day following happened to be one of continued rain; and, finding that the water filled up his lines; probably, too, thinking more on "glorious Tam," than on the *memento mori* he was attempting to engrave, our artist resolved to take time by the forelock, and to set about the "specimen head" directly. Accordingly, pulling from the ruins of the church of Crosby a rabat of the doorway, as a proper material for his purpose, he sat himself down among the long rank grass covering the graves, and in that situation actually finished the head before rising. Nay, more, although the day has been described to us "as a downright pour," so total was his absorption in the work—so complete his insensibility to every thing else, that he declares himself to have been unconscious of the "rattling showers," from the moment he commenced. Such is the power of genuine and natural enthusiasm in a favourite pursuit. This head, which contained, perhaps, more expression than that even of the present figure, decided the matter. Next day, the block requisite for a full-length of Tam o' Shanter, was brought into Ayr, a load for four stout horses, and placed in a proper workshop, within Cromwell's fort.

It may be interesting to mention a few particulars of the manner in which these figures have been composed and finished. "Tam" was selected by the artist as a subject for his chisel. The figure is understood to bear a strong traditional resemblance to the well-known Douglas Graham, some forty years ago a renowned specimen of a Carrick farmer, and who, residing at Shanter, furnished to Burns the prototype of his hero.

—Souter Johnnie,  
His antient, trusty, drouthie cronie—

is said to be a striking likeness of a living wight—a cobbler near Maybole; not that this individual sat for his portraiture, but that the artist appears to have wrought from the reminiscences of two interviews with which he was favoured, after twice travelling "some lang Scotch miles," in order to persuade the said "souter" to transfer his body, by means of his pair of soles, from his own to the artist's studio. The bribe of two guineas a-week, exclusive of "half-mutchkins withouten score," proved, however, unavailing, and the cobbler remained firm to the last. By this refusal, "the burkie" has only become poorer by the said couple of guineas, and certain "half-mutchkins drouthier," for so true has the eye of the sculptor proved, that every one is said instantly to recognize the cobbler's phiz and person. A strange perverseness, indeed, or fatality, or what you will, seems to have

seized upon all the favoured few selected as fitting archetypes for these admirable figures. For, Tam's "nether man" occasioning some anxiety in the perfecting of its sturdy symmetry, a carter, we believe, was laid hold of, and the *gamashins* being pulled on for half-an-hour, Tam's right leg was finished in rivalry of the said gentleman's supporter. It appears to have been agreed upon that he should return at a fitting opportunity, having thus left Tam "hirpling;" but, in the interval, the story of the sitting unfortunately taking air, and the soubriquet of "Tam o' Shanter" threatening to attach to the lawful and Christian appellations of the man of carts, no inducement could again bring him within the unhallowed precincts of our sculptor's workshop. In like manner, though at a somewhat later period, while the artist was engaged upon the figure of the landlady, no persuasion could prevail upon one of the many "bonny lasses" who have given such celebrity to Ayr, to exhibit even the "fitting of their pearls" to Mr. Thom's gaze. One sony damsel, on being hard pressed to grant a sitting, replied, "Na, na, I've nae mind to be nick-named 'landlady'; and, as for gudewife, twa speerings mae gang to that name."

It will, doubtless, excite the admiration of every one in the slightest degree conversant with the Arts, that these figures, so full of life, ease, and character, were thus actually executed without model, or drawing, or palpable archetype whatsoever. The artist, indeed, knows nothing of modelling; and so little of drawing, that we question if he would not find difficulty in making even a tolerable sketch of his own work. The chisel is his modelling tool—his pencil—the only instrument of his art, in short, with which he is acquainted, but which he handles in a manner, we may say, almost unprecedented in the history of sculpture. This, however, is the minor part; for we think, nay, are sure, we discover in this dexterity of hand, in this unerring precision of eye, in this strong, though still untutored, conception of form and character—the native elements of the highest art. These primordial attributes of genius, by proper culture, may do honour to the country and to their possessor. At all events, instruction will refine and improve attempts in the present walk of art, even should study be unable to elevate attainment to a higher. Now, however, it would be not only premature, but unjust, to criticise these statues as regular labours of sculpture. They are to be regarded as wonderful, nay, almost miraculous, efforts of native, unaided, unlearned talent—as an approach to truth almost in spite of nature and of science; but they do not hold with respect to legitimate sculpture—the high-souled, the noblest, the severest of all arts—the same rank as, in painting, the works of the Dutch masters do as compared with the lofty spirits of the Romans—precisely for this reason, that while similar subjects are not only fit, but often felicitous, subjects for the pencil, they are altogether improper objects of sculptural representation.

[Though, from the circumstance of being the principals in the composition, and from the intrinsic excellence of their conception, these two figures have chiefly occupied the public attention, they ought not to induce forgetfulness of the artist's other labours. These, besides the Landlord and his mate, consist of numerous copies, in various sizes, of this original group, and of numerous sculptures, of different character and purpose, from a "head-stane" upwards, executed by Mr. Thom, since his residence in Ayr as a professional stone-cutter. Here his studio is the resort of all intelligent strangers who visit this ancient and beautiful burgh; while his modest manners, and moral worth, have conciliated the respect of every one. The character of the Landlady is well sustained, as the buxom, bustling head of a well frequented "change-house." Her lord and master, on the other hand, is represented as one who has little to say in his own house, and better qualified to drink, than to earn, his pint. The former seems by no means disinclined to reciprocate glances with Tam; while the latter is so convulsed with laughter at the Souter's stories, as to be hardly capable of maintaining the equipoise of the foaming tankard in his hand. Neither, however, is equal in graphic truth and humour, to their two companions. A more gigantic, but by no means so happy a work, is the statue of the Scottish patriot, lately placed in the nich of the New Tower, just erected in Ayr, on the site of the ancient "Wallace Tower" of Burns. In fact, we regard this figure as nearly a failure. It possesses neither the truth of nature, nor the dignity of ideal representation. Omitting others of less moment, we shall pass to the most perfect of all Mr. Thom's works—the figure of "Old Mortality." This, though only a model, and not yet, we believe, even commissioned in stone, offers by far the most striking evidence of genius in its author. The costume, attitude, and expression of the old man, as he is represented sitting upon a grave stone, which he has been occupied in cleaning, are most admirable; and perhaps no artist ever more completely realized the exquisite conception of the original mind. The history of this composition supplies a striking instance of the power of genius over spirits of a congenial stamp, and of the singular coincidences which sometimes take place in its manner of conceiving the same sentiment. During a voyage to London, in a Leith steam packet, Mr. Thom one day found in the cabin, Sir Walter's delightful tale of Old Mortality, which he had never read. Taking it up, he quickly became entirely engrossed in the narrative. The description of the old man, to whom posterity is indebted for many a record, else lost, of our single-minded sufferers

for conscience's sake—so fixed itself upon the artist's imagination, that he instantly conceived the idea of representing it in sculpture. By way of concentrating his thoughts, he sketched a figure in the imagined attitude, on one of the boards of the book he had been reading. Pleased with his idea, he transferred it to his pocket-book. A few days after his arrival in London, he was introduced to our celebrated countryman, Wilkie, who, with his accustomed kindness, showed him his portfolios. Mr. Thom's surprise may be imagined, when in one of these he found a sketch of Old Mortality, almost identical with his own, executed by Wilkie several years before. The same thought had struck both, and almost in the same manner.—Sept. 21, 1832.]

### THE DEAF POSTILION.

In the month of January, 1804, Joey Duddle, a well-known postilion on the north road, caught a cold through sleeping without his nightcap; deafness was, eventually, the consequence; and, as it will presently appear, a young fortune-hunter lost twenty thousand pounds and a handsome wife, through Joey Duddle's indiscretion, in omitting, on one fatal occasion, to wear his sixpenny woollen nightcap.

Joey did not discontinue driving after his misfortune; his eyes and his spurs were, generally speaking, of more utility in his monotonous avocation than his ears. His stage was, invariably, nine miles up the road, or 'a long fifteen' down towards Gretna; and he had repeated his two rides so often, that he could have gone over the ground blindfold. People in chaises are rarely given to talking with their postilions. Joey knew, by experience, what were the two or three important questions in posting, and the usual times and places when and where they were asked; and he was always prepared with the proper answers. At those parts of the road where objects of interest to strangers occurred, Joey faced about on his saddle, and if he perceived the eyes of his passengers fixed upon him, their lips in motion, and their fingers pointing towards a gentleman's seat, a fertile valley, a beautiful stream, or a fine wood, he naturally enough presumed that they were in the act of inquiring what the seat, the valley, the stream, or the wood was called; and he replied according to the fact. The noise of the wheels was a very good excuse for such trifling blunders as Joey occasionally made; and whenever he found himself progressing towards a dilemma, he very dexterously contrived, by means of a sly poke with his spur, to make his hand-horse evidently require the whole of his attention. At the journey's end, when the gentleman he had driven produced a purse, Joey, without looking at his lips, knew that he was asking a question, to which it was his duty to reply. "Nineteen and sixpence," or "Two-and-twenty shillings," according as the job had been the "short up" or the "long down." If any more questions were asked, Joey suddenly recollected something that demanded his immediate attention, begged pardon, promised to be back in a moment, and disappeared never to return. The natural expression of his features indicated a remarkably taciturn disposition; almost every one with whom he came in contact, was deterred, by his physiognomy, from asking him any but necessary questions; and as he was experienced enough to answer, or cunning enough to evade these, when he thought fit, but few travellers ever discovered that Joey Duddle was deaf. So blind is man in some cases, even to his bodily defects, that Joey, judging from his general success in giving correct replies to the queries propounded to him, almost doubted his own infirmity, and never would admit that he was above one point beyond "little hard of hearing."

On the first of June, in the year 1806, about nine o'clock in the morning, a chaise and four was perceived approaching towards the inn kept by Joey's master, at a first rate Gretna Green gallop. As it dashed up to the door, the postboys vociferated the usual call for two pair of horses in a hurry; but unfortunately the innkeeper had only Joey and his tits at home; and as the four horses which brought the chaise from the last posting-house had already done a double job that day, the lads would not ride them on through so heavy a stage as the "long down."

"How excessively provoking!" exclaimed one of the passengers; "I am certain that our pursuers are not far behind us. The idea of having the cup of bliss dashed from my very lips,—of such beauty and affluence being snatched from me for want of a second pair of paltry postboys,—drives me frantic!"

"A Gretna Green affair, I presume, sir?" observed the inquisitive landlurd.

The gentleman made no scruple of admitting that he had run away with the fair young creature who accompanied him, and that she was entitled to a fortune of twenty thousand pounds—"one half of which," continued the gentleman, "I would freely give if I had it, to be at this instant behind four horses, scampering away, due north, at full speed."

"I can assure you, sir," said the landlurd, "that a fresh pair of such animals as I offer you, will carry you over the ground as quick as if you had ten dozen of the regular road-hacks. No man keeps better cattle than I do, and this pair beats all the others in my stables by two miles an hour. But in ten minutes, perhaps, and certainly within half an hour—"

"Half an hour! half a minute's delay might ruin me,"

replied the gentleman, "I hope I shall find the character you have given your cattle a correct one—dash on, postilion!"

Before this short conversation between the innkeeper was concluded, Joey Duddle had put to his horses—which were, of course, kept harnessed—and taken his seat, prepared to start at a moment's notice. He kept his eye upon the innkeeper, who gave the usual signal of a rapid wave of the hand, as soon as the gentleman ceased speaking; and Joey Duddle's cattle, in obedience to the whip and spur, bobbled off at that awkward and evidently painful pace, which is, perforce, adopted by the most praiseworthy post-horses for the first ten minutes or so of their journey. But the pair over which Joey presided were, as the innkeeper had asserted, very speedy; and the gentleman soon felt satisfied, that it would take an extraordinary quadruple team to overtake them. His hopes rose at the sight of each succeeding milestone; he ceased to put his head out of the window every five minutes, and gazed anxiously up the road; he already anticipated a triumph—when a crack, a crush, a shriek from the lady, an instant change of position, and a positive pause occurred, in the order in which they are stated, with such suddenness and relative rapidity, that the gentleman was, for a moment or two, utterly deprived of his presence of mind by alarm and astonishment. The bolt which connects the fore-wheels, splinter-bar, springs, fore-bed, axletree, &c. &c., with the perch that passes under the body of the chaise to the hind wheel-springs and carriage, had snapped asunder; the whole of the fore parts were instantly dragged onwards by the horses; the traces by which the body was attached to the fore springs gave way; the chaise fell forward, and of course, remained stationary, with its contents, in the middle of the road; while the deaf postilion rode on, with his eyes intently fixed on vacancy before him, as though nothing whatever had happened.

Alarmed and indignant in the highest degree, at the postilion's conduct, the gentleman shouted with all his might such exclamations as any man would naturally use on such an occasion; but Joey, although still but at a little distance, took no notice of what had occurred behind his back, and very complacently trotted his horses on at the rate of eleven or twelve miles an hour. He thought the cattle went better than ever; his mind was occupied with the prospect of a speedy termination to his journey; he felt elated at the idea of outstripping the pursuers,—for Joey had discrimination enough to perceive, at a glance, that his passengers were runaway lovers,—and he went on very much to his own satisfaction. As he approached the inn which terminated the "long down," Joey, as usual, put his horses upon their mettle, and they, having nothing but a fore carriage and a young lady's trunk behind them, rattled up to the door at a rate unexampled in the annals of posting, with all the little boys and girls in the neighbourhood hallooing in their rear.

It was not until he drew up to the inn door and glided from his saddle, that Joey discovered his disaster; and nothing could equal the utter astonishment which his features then displayed. He gazed at the place where the body of his chaise, his passengers, and hind wheels ought to have been, for above a minute, and then suddenly started down the road on foot under an idea that he must very recently have dropped them. On nearing a little elevation, which commanded above two miles of the ground over which he had come, he found, to his utter dismay, that no traces of the main body of his chaise were perceptible; nor could he discover his passengers, who had, as it appeared in the sequel, been overtaken by the young lady's friends. Poor Joey immediately ran into a neighbouring hay-loft, where he hid himself, in despair, for three days; and when discovered, he was with great difficulty persuaded by his master, who highly esteemed him, to resume his whip, and return to his saddle.—*Three Courses and a Dessert.*

### PINS.

This pin was not known in England till towards the middle or latter end of the reign of Henry VIII; the ladies until then using ribbands, loops, skewers made of wood, of brass, silver, or gold. At first the pin was so ill made, that in the thirty-fourth year of the king, parliament enacted that none should be sold unless they be "double-headed, and have the heads soldered fast to the shanks of the pynne," &c. But this interference had such an influence on the manufacture, that the public could obtain no supply until the obnoxious act was repealed. On referring to the statute book, the act of repeal, which passed in the thirty-seventh year of the same reign, contains the following clauses, which tends to show how cautious the legislature ought to be not to interfere with any manufactory which they do not perfectly understand. The act of repeal having recited the former act, it then goes on to say, "At which tyme the pynners playnly promised to serve the kynges liege people wel and sufficiently, and at a reasonable price. And for as much sens the making of the saide act there hath ben scarcitie of pynnes within this realme, that the kynges liege people have not ben wel nor completely served of such pynnes, nor are like to be served, nor the pynners of this realme (as it doth now manifestly appere,) be able to serve the people of this realme according to their saide promise. In consideration whereof, it maie please the king, &c. that it maie be adjudged and demed from henceforth frustrated and nillated, and to be repealed for ever."—*Stat. Henrici Octavi xlvii. cap. 13.*

### WEAVING.

The vestments of the early inhabitants of the world discovered neither art nor industry. They made use of such as nature presented and which needed the least preparation. Some nations covered themselves with the bark of trees, others with leaves, or bulrushes rudely interwoven. The skins of animals were also universally used as garments, worn without preparation, and in the same state as they come from the bodies of the animals.

In process of time recourse was had to the wool of animals, and this led to the farther discovery of the art of uniting the separate parts into one continued thread, by means of the spindle; and this would consequently lead to the next step, the invention of weaving, which, according to Democritus, who flourished 400 years before Christ, arose from the art of the spider, who guides and manages the threads by the weight of her own body.

That the invention of weaving was long prior to the time of Democritus, appears from the sacred writings. This is evident also, from the answer which Abraham gave to the king of Sodom:—"I will not," said he, "take from a thread of the wool, even to a shoe latchet, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich."

Inventress of the wool, fair Lina sings  
The flying shuttle through the dancing strings,  
Inlays the broider'd weft with flowery dyes,  
Quick bent the reeds, the pedals fall and rise;  
Slow from the beam the lengths of warp unwind,  
And dance and nod the massy weights behind.

Chronology informs us, linen was first made in England, 1253. "Now began the luxurious to wear linen, but the generality woollen shirts." Table linen was very scarce in England, in 1386. A company of linen weavers, however, came over from the Netherlands in that year, after which it became more abundant.

### A MARVELLOUS STORY.

I was bred up in the dislike of the marvellous, or the stupid wonderful, as my uncle called it. I must relate an anecdote in point. Some gentlemen were dining together, and relating their travelling adventures; one of them dealt so much on the marvellous, that it induced another to give him a lesson.

"I was once," said he, "engaged in a skirmishing party in America; I advanced too far, was separated from my friends, and saw three Indians in pursuit of me: the horrors of the tomahawk in the hands of angry savages, took possession of my mind; I considered for a moment what was to be done; most of us love life, and mine was both precious and useful to my family; I was swift of foot, and fear added to my speed. After looking back—for the country was an open one—I at length perceived that one of my enemies had outrun the others and the well-known saying of 'Divide and conquer,' occurring to me, I slackened my speed, and allowed him to come up; we engaged in mutual fury; I hope none here (bowing to his auditors) will doubt the result; in a few minutes he lay a corpse at my feet; in this short space of time, the two Indians had advanced upon me, so I took again to my heels,—not from cowardice, I can in truth declare,—but with the hope of reaching a neighbouring wood, where I knew dwelt a tribe friendly to the English; this hope, however, I was forced to give up; for, on looking back, I saw one of my pursuers far before the other. I waited for him, recovering my almost exhausted breath, and soon this Indian shared the fate of the first. I had now only one enemy to deal with; but I felt fatigued, and being near the wood, I was more desirous to save my own life than to destroy another of my fellow-creatures; I plainly perceived smoke curling up amongst the trees, I redoubled my speed, I prayed to Heaven, I felt assured my prayers would be granted—but at this moment the yell of the Indian's voice sounded in my ears—I even thought I felt his warm breath—there was no choice—I turned round—"Here the gentleman, who had related the wonderful stories at first, grew impatient past his endurance; he called out, "Well, sir, and you killed him also?"—"No sir, he killed me."—*Memoirs of a Gentleman of the Old School.*

### EPITHETS.

The meaning of the word *Wretch* is one not generally understood. It was originally, and is now, in some parts of England, used as a term of the softest and fondest tenderness. This is not the only instance in which words in their present general acceptance bear a very opposite meaning to what they did in Shakespeare's time. The word *Wench*, formerly, was not used in that low and vulgar acceptance that it is at present. *Damsel* was the appellation of young ladies of quality, and *Dame* a title of distinction. *Knave* once signified a servant; and in an early translation of the New Testament, instead of "Paul the Servant," we read "Paul the Knave of Jesus Christ." On the other hand, the word *Companion*, instead of being the honourable synonym of Associate, occurs in the play of *Othello*, with the same contemptuous meaning which we now affix, in its abusive sense, to the word "Fellow;" for Emilia, perceiving that some secret villain had aspersed the character of the virtuous Desdemona, thus indignantly exclaims:—

O, Heaven! that such *Companions* thou'dst unfold  
And put in every honest hand a whip,  
To lash the rascal through the world.

\* Lucretius, lib. vi. verse 1011.

† Genesis xxxi. 19, and xxxviii. 12, 14.

‡ Ibid xiv. 23



## CRIMINAL TRIALS.

ALISON PEIRSON—WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY.

At the period when this trial took place (May, 1588,) the jury had only the power of deciding upon the facts of the case; it remained with the judge to determine the degree of criminality incurred. Thus, if one man killed another in a fray, the jury could only go the length of finding that he did so; and it was then for the bench to settle whether the guilt was that of murder, slaughter, or homicide. The verdicts, therefore, instead of a simple declaration of the prisoner's guilt or innocence, frequently contain a recapitulation of those particulars in the indictment, which the jury held to be established by the evidence. In the case of Alison Peirson, the verdict is the only part of the proceedings recorded at any length, and it offers a pretty full detail of her alleged dealings with the evil powers. It is probably the substance of the poor wretch's confessions, elicited by the usual system of torture.

Happening once to fall sick on the Moor of Grange, Alison lay down alone, when there came a man dressed in green clothes and said to her, "that if she would be faithful, he wad do her good." Being greatly alarmed, she cried aloud for help; but no one hearing her, she charged him in Heaven's name to tell her, if he came for the weal of her soul. To this adjuration he made no answer, but went away and left her. He appeared to her afterwards with a large company of men and women, who with piping and mirth, made excellent cheer, which appears to have produced a favourable impression on Alison's mind; for she was now prevailed on to join the cavalcade, and to accompany them from Fife to Lothian, where the means of mending their cheer was afforded, by the appearance of punchons of wine with the necessary "tasses," or drinking cups. Their joviality seems not to have been bounded by discretion, but to have ended in a brawl, in which Alison got a blow from one of the party, which "take all the poistie of her ear syde fra her," that is, deprived her of the power of her left side. The place remained "blae and evil faurrit," (discoloured and unsightly,) though there was no pain in the particular spot where the stroke was inflicted.

After this, Alison had various encounters with the fairies, who were exceedingly variable in their conduct towards her. She was allowed to see them gather herba before sunrise, which they converted into salves; and by the knowledge thus acquired, she was enabled to effect many cures in the neighbourhood of St. Andrews during a course of sixteen years. But, on the other hand, they handled her roughly at times, especially if she disclosed any of her meetings with them. She was sometimes well and sometimes ill; one while with them and another while away; she would go to bed "hail and feir" overnight, and not know whether she might be hurried before the morning. "When we hear the whirlwind blaw in the sea," says she, "they will be commonly with it, or coming soon thereafter." She dreaded their approach, and often shrieked with terror when they came.

What served to reconcile her in some degree to her intercourse with these fickle beings, was her intimacy with one Mr. William Sympon, an uncle of her own, "a great scholar and doctor of medicine," who must have received his learning and taken his degrees in Fairyland; for, according to his niece, when he was a child "ane mann of Egypt, ane gyant," carried him off, and he subsequently rose to be of much esteem and influence in the court of Elfame. His protection was of considerable advantage to Alison, whom he warned when the "good neighbours" intended to surprise her with a visit, instructing her how to behave towards them. He also initiated her into the mysteries of his art, describing every kind of sickness, the herba proper for the cure of each, and the mode of using them, besides giving her directions for the treatment of particular cases.

It was with the assistance of this familiar that Alison furnished prescriptions to Patrick Adamson, Archbishop of St. Andrews, whose application to this source for the removal of his ailments was eagerly seized upon as a ground of censure, by those to whom he was opposed in matters of church government. "Vorily," says Mr. James Melvill in his *Diary*, about "these witches we war plain and sharp with him, baith from pulpit, in doctrine, and by censure of our presbytery." By the exertions of this church judiciary, Alison Peirson had been apprehended, examined, and committed prisoner to the castle of St. Andrews, from which she escaped, it was alleged, with the connivance of the archbishop; and it was not till four years afterwards that she again fell into the hands of the administrators of the law, and was tried before the court of judicatory. Adamson was a man of sound learning, a poet of no mean pretensions, and so skilful in the management of affairs, as to have been the churchman upon whom King James principally depended for forwarding his views in regard to the establishment of episcopacy in Scotland. It has been made ground of reproach against this prelate, that he should have been so weak as to repose confidence in the charmed remedies with which this woman supplied him. But in as far as mere faith in her supernatural powers goes, his credulity was no greater than that of his opponents, who brought her to trial for the supposed exercise of those powers, for which she in the end suffered death. The only difference was that they stood upon the illegality of such practices, which he overlooked in consideration of the advantage he expected to derive from them. Whether

there were any virtues in the incantations employed in the preparation, the medicines were of no watery and weakening consistence, for she caused him to eat a stewed fowl, and used to medicate a quart of claret with certain herbs, which the archbishop drank at two meals, a single draught at each. The use of ewe-milk was also enjoined, but in what manner is not mentioned, and his cheeks, neck, breast, stomach, and sides, were rubbed with an ointment compounded according to the directions of Alison's familiar, Mr. William Simpson. In consequence of this treatment, the disease, according to the belief of the time, was removed to a palfrey, which died by way of substitute for the archbishop.

A satire of the period exposed the archbishop's traffickings with the witches; but Alison Peirson was more severely dealt with, having suffered the fate indicated by the words "convicta et combusta." If we include in what is expressed by "convicta," the torments inflicted to produce a confession upon which the witch might be found guilty, they were often still more unendurable than the consequences of conviction—strangling and burning—which in these cases was implied by "combusta." There does not seem to have been any display of the malignant passions, on the part of this poor woman. If she herself believed that she possessed supernatural power, she did not try to exert it for the destruction or injury of her kind, but rather with a view to produce good by the cure of diseases. If the confession was wrung from her in the moment of extreme torture, and was merely a declaration made by her in the hope that it would procure a cessation of the cruelty of her prosecutors, still it shews that her temper was mild and inoffensive; for even in the fictions of a morose person, the native severity may be traced in the darker colouring with which it invests the story. The confessions of witches, though they cannot be received as proofs that the transactions they narrate actually happened, may in general be relied upon as evidencing the manner in which the wretched creatures would have employed the assistance of the spiritual world, could they have commanded it.

## JOHN SEMPILL OF BELTREIS—TREASON.

The official statement of this gentleman's trial contains a recapitulation of the indictment, which is vague and general in its terms. Without condescending upon any overt act or specific treasonable speeches, it accuses him of devising "to sla, schwt, and cruelie murther" the Regent Morton; of "plainly conserting and conceiving the samin murder and slaughter, most treasonably and deceitfully in his heart and mind, ordaining the same to have been suddenly committed; doing what was in him to have performed the samin, conform to his deliberate intention, treasonably devised and premeditated, as said is." It mentions his having confessed the crime, and concludes with the sentence, "That he should be taken to the market cross of Edinburgh, and there demeaned as ane traitor; and all his lands, tacks, steadings, rowms, possessions, and goods, to be forfeited and escheat to our sovereign lord's use."

On looking to other sources to supply the meagreness of this very unsatisfactory record, we find a disclosure of the most detestable oppression and cruelty on the part of the Regent. At the same time we must remark, that the confessions dictated to the accused seem to have been constructed in a very inartificial manner, as if from a consciousness that even an ordinary nicety was needless where the government, eager to convict, would be contented with a few declamatory generalities, which are much more easily thrown together, than a well compacted tissue of particular facts. Sempill had married one of the Queen's Maies (Mary Livingston), on whom her royal mistress had bestowed a small portion of ground. Morton, desirous of reducing this grant (in order, Crawford alleges, that he might appropriate the piece of land which lay contiguous to a part of his estate,) brought the business before the Court of Session, contending that the crown lands could not be alienated. Beltreis in vain answered "that it was a plain deed of gift under the great and privy seals, and therefore could not be recalled." Morton sat in person to browbeat the judges. This exasperated the defendant, and seeing the cause about to be decided against him, he protested with incautious vehemence, "that if he lost the suit, he should lose his life too." Whiteford, younger of Milne-ton, a near relative of Beltreis, was not more circumspect, and gave vent to his indignation in an expression having a double allusion—to the Regent's lowliness of stature, and to his tyrannical conduct: "Nero," he said, "was a dwarf to Morton." Both were instantly imprisoned, and it was given out that they had a plot to murder the Regent. On examination they denied the fact; but there was a method of subjecting every kind of contumacy not supported by uncommon physical firmness, as well as moral courage. The moor extorted from Beltreis an acquiescence in all that his examiners suggested; but Milne-ton was not to be so overcome—he endured the torture and confessed nothing. Such, unhappily, was the nature of the preconditions in the earlier practice of the Scottish courts. If an acknowledgment of guilt could have been wrung from both those gentlemen, their fate would have been sealed; but the constancy of the one was held to prove the weakness of the other, in a case not strengthened by the smallest vestige of other evidence. Milne-ton was discharged, and his nephew, though sentenced to be hanged, was ultimately dismissed also. The trial of Beltreis took place on 15th June, 1577.

## SUPPLY OF WATER IN LONDON.

When men gather together in large bodies, and inhabit towns or cities, a plentiful supply of water is the first thing to which they direct their attention. If towns are built in situations where pure water cannot be readily obtained, the inhabitants, and especially the poorer sort, suffer even more misery than results from the want of bread and clothes. In some cities of Spain, for instance, where the people understand very little about machinery, water, at particular periods of the year, is as dear as wine; and the labouring classes are consequently in a most miserable condition. In London, on the contrary, water is so plentiful, that twenty-nine millions of gallons are daily supplied to the inhabitants; which quantity, distributed to about one hundred and twenty-five thousand houses and other buildings, is at a rate of above two hundred gallons every day to each house. To many of the houses this water is, by the aid of machinery, not only delivered to the kitchen and wash-house on the ground floors, where it is most wanted, but is sent up to the very tops of the houses, to save even the comparatively little labour of fetching it from the bottom. All this is done at an average cost to each house of twopence a day; which is a less price than the labour of an able-bodied man would be worth to fetch a single bucket, from a spring half-a-mile from his own dwelling. And how did the inhabitants of London set about getting this great supply of water, and by so doing, render this vast place one of the most healthful cities in the world? As long ago as the year 1236, when a great want of water was felt in London, the little springs being blocked up and covered over by buildings, the ruling men of the city caused water to be brought from Tyburn, which was then a distant village, by means of pipes; and they laid a tax upon particular branches of trade to pay the expense of this great blessing to all. In succeeding times more pipes and conduits, that is more machinery, were established for the same good purpose; and two centuries afterwards, King Henry the Sixth gave his aid to the same sort of works, in granting particular advantages in obtaining lead for making the pipes. As this great town more and more increased, more water-works were found necessary; till, at last, in the reign of James the First, which was nearly two hundred years after that of Henry the Sixth, a most ingenious and enterprising man, and a great benefactor to his country, Hugh Myddleton, undertook to bring a river of pure water above thirty-eight miles out of its natural course for the supply of London. He persevered in this immense undertaking, in spite of every difficulty, till he at last accomplished that great good which he had proposed, of bringing wholesome water to every man's door. At the present time, the New River, which was the work of Hugh Myddleton, supplies thirteen millions of gallons of water every day; and though the original projector was ruined by the undertaking, in consequence of the difficulty which he had in procuring proper support, such is now the general advantage of the benefit which he procured for his fellow citizens, and so desirous are the people to possess that advantage, that a share in the New River Company, which was at first sold for one hundred pounds, is now worth fifteen thousand pounds.—*Results of Machinery.*

## WILLIE OF WESTBURNFLAT.

ONE of the last border reivers of whom tradition preserves any account, was a personage of the clan Armstrong, who flourished within the beginning of the last century. After having made himself dreaded over the whole country, he at last came to the following end. One —, a man of large property, having lost twelve cows in one night, raised the county of Teviotdale, and traced the robbers into Liddesdale, as far as the house of this Armstrong, commonly called Willie of Westburnflat, from the place of his residence, on the banks of the Hermitage water. Fortunately for the pursuers, he was then asleep; so that he was secured, along with nine of his friends, without much resistance. He was brought to trial at Selkirk; and, although no precise evidence was adduced to convict him of the special fact, (the cattle never having been recovered,) yet the jury brought him in guilty on his own general character; or, as it is called in our law, habit and repute. When sentence was pronounced, Willie arose; and, seizing the oaken chair in which he was placed, broke it into pieces by main strength, and offered to his companions, who were involved in the same doom, that, if they would stand behind him, he would fight his way out of Selkirk with these weapons. But they held his hands, and besought him to let them die like Christians. They were accordingly executed in form of law. This was the last trial at Selkirk. The people of Liddesdale, who, (perhaps not erroneously,) still consider the sentence as iniquitous, remarked, that —, the prosecutor, never threw afterwards, but came to beggary and ruin, with his whole family.

## GRAMMACHREE MOLLY.

THE following note, containing evidence to prove that the celebrated air, called "GRAMMACHREE MOLLY," was composed in Scotland, was drawn up in 1819, by the Right Hon. Sir John Sinclair, from the information of the aged individual alluded to, who died in 1827, above a hundred years of age.

From the very style of the music, there is every reason to believe that this celebrated air was composed in Scotland; for it possesses all that tenderness and simplicity by which the Scottish songs are so peculiarly distinguished. That point, however, seems now to be established beyond the possibility of doubt, by the evidence that was given by a very old man, John Macdonald, who was born near Kingsburgh, in the Isle of Skye, in the year 1726, and who, on the 20th December, 1819, was about ninety-three years of age, when he gave the following evidence:—

John Macdonald remembers, when he was about twelve years old, having learnt that air, which, in Gaelic, is called "Mhàile Chng'g," from a native of Breadalbane, who went about singing songs; and he recollects distinctly having heard that air sung by him in the year 1736. The tune, he was informed, was owing to the following incident:—

During King William's wars on the Continent, soon after the Revolution, it was usual, at the end of the campaign, for both armies to retire into winter quarters; and numbers, both of the men and officers, got leave of absence to go home and see their friends. Among others who availed themselves of this privilege, was a young Highland officer, whose relations lived in the upper parts of Perthshire. He visited about in that district, and entertained his friends by talking of the battles in which he had fought, and the wonderful events he had witnessed; and he everywhere met with the most cordial reception. He was at last invited to the house of a gentleman who had an only daughter, whose beauty was the universal theme of admiration. He there, as usual, recited his martial facts, till, like Othello, he made an impression on the young lady, which the gallant soldier soon perceived, and he contrived to settle a plan with her for their eloping together at midnight. They got off unperceived; and, having travelled several miles, they at last came to an inn, where they thought they might refresh themselves in safety. The enraged father, however, as soon as he had discovered his daughter's flight, assembled his men, and pursued them with such speed and eagerness, that he overtook them soon after they got into the inn. The lover, though he had nobody to support him, yet was determined not to yield up his mistress; and, being well armed and an excellent swordsman, he resolved to resist any attack made upon him. When the party pursuing entered the inn, his mistress ran for protection behind him; and when he was defending himself and her with his sword, which was a very heavy one, and loaded with what is called a steel-apple, (in Gaelic, *Uahal an a chlaibh*), in preparing for giving a deadly stroke, the point of his sword accidentally struck his mistress, then behind him, so violent a blow, that she instantly expired at his feet.

Upon seeing what had happened, he immediately surrendered himself, saying, "That he did not wish to live—his earthly treasures being gone." When in prison, he composed both the air and the words; and the dreadful scene he had just witnessed, and of which he was the sole cause, would naturally call forth the most melancholy effusions of music and of poetry. He was executed the next day.

These events happened a number of years before John Macdonald first heard the air sung in the Isle of Skye, which was in the year 1736. It is also said, that the loves of the unfortunate officer and his mistress, are alluded to in the well-known song, "Will you go to Flanders, my Mally, O!"

## RAPID GROWTH OF FISH.

The rapid growth of some fish is very extraordinary. I saw three pike taken out of a pond in Staffordshire belonging to the present Sir Jervoise Clark Jervoise, two of which weighed 36lb. each, and the other 35lb. The pond was fished every seven years, and, supposing that store pike of 6 or 7lb. weight were left in it, the growth of the pike in question must have been at the rate of at least 4lb. a year. Salmon, however, grow much faster. It is now ascertained that grise, or young salmon, of from 2½ to 3lb. weight, have been sent to the London markets in the month of May, the spawn from which they come having only been deposited in the preceding October or November, and the ova taking three months of the time to quicken. It has also been ascertained by experiment that a grise which weighed 6lb. in February, after spawning, has, on its return from the sea in September, weighed 13lb.; and a salmon fry of April will in June weigh 4lb. and in August 6lb.—*Cleanings of Natural History.*

\* The steel apple was a piece of steel, that ran on a wheel from the butt to the top of the sword, and gave great additional force to the stroke. John Macdonald, many years ago, saw one of these at Lord Macdonald's house at Mougstad. The circumstance of the steel-apple is a strong proof the authenticity of the story, as it must have greatly added to the weight of the blow given by the sword, and consequently accounts for total catastrophe.

## SCOTTISH DUKES.

## BUCCLEUCH.

This, though a most respectable, has no claim to be considered as an ancient family; nor has it figured much in history. Its first man of the least note, was Sir Walter Scott, laird of Branksholm, and some otherlands in Roxburghshire, in the middle of the fifteenth century. Previously, their principal estate was Murlinton, in Lanarkshire; but Ingils of Branksholm having one day complained of the inroads of the English upon that border property, Scott offered him his Clydesdale estate in exchange, which was instantly agreed to. It is said, that, when the bargain was completed, Sir Walter drily remarked, that the Cumberland cattle were as good as those of Teviotdale; and instantly commenced a system of reprisals upon the English, which we shrewdly suspect to have been more than duly consolatory. Sir Walter Scott of Branksholm was one of the many gentlemen who rose upon the ruins of the Douglases. He died about 1470, possessed of a great part of those pastoral lands in Selkirkshire and Roxburghshire, which still form the best part of the family property. His descendants, for several generations, were little better than *rovers*. The Sir Walter of Queen Mary's time was a zealous adherent of her interests. The day after the Regent Morton was killed, he, and Ker of Fernhurst, before they could have learned the fact by any ordinary means, broke into the English border upon an expedition of reprisal. On being asked how he could venture upon such an outrage, so long as the Earl of Murray was Regent, he said, "Tush, the Regent is as cold as my bridle-bit." It thus appears, that, like the Hamiltons and other partisans of Mary, he must have been privy to the design of assassinating Murray. His wife, who was reputed for a witch, is the heroine of the Lay of the Last Minstrel. Their son, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, performed the singularly perilous exploit of liberating a predatory dependent, of the name of Kilmont Willie, from Carlisle Castle, during the night. Being afterwards sent, by James VI., to make his peace with Queen Elizabeth, and asked by that princess how he could dare to do such an action; he answered, over his shoulder, drawing himself up haughtily, "Dare! what is there, madam, that a man may not dare?" The Queen, who, delighted in the exhibition of manly character, was much pleased with the reply. "With ten thousand such men," she said to a lord in waiting, "our brother of Scotland might shake the firmest throne in Europe." This bold baron was very active in quieting the borders, after the union of the crowns. He draughted off a regiment of desperate outlaws, and carried them over to fight in the wars of Holland. For his services in this way, he received the first peerage of the family—that of Lord Scott of Buccleuch—in 1606. The locality of the title is a small recess in one of the minor valleys of Selkirkshire, in which, according to tradition, the *vis primus* of family, a mere peasant, first won distinction by helping the king to kill a buck. Walter, the son of the first lord, became Earl of Buccleuch, in 1619, by the favour of James VI. Francis, the second Earl, who added Dalkeith to the family property, was a zealous royalist; and, on that account, fined by Cromwell, in no less than 15,000*l*. At his death, in 1651, he left two daughters, Mary and Anne. The former, being one of the greatest matches in the country, instantly became the object of deep matrimonial intrigues. At the early age of eleven, she was united to Walter Scott, the son of a small border laird, and who afterwards became conspicuous, as Earl of Tarras, in the affair of Russel and Sydney. The event caused what would now be called a *great sensation*. The young countess, however, died in 1661, without issue, and the peerage descended to her sister Anne, who, at twelve years of age, was married (1665) to the Duke of Monmouth, the natural son of Charles II., who was then fourteen. Monmouth, on the day of his marriage, was created Duke of Buccleuch. Duchess Anne had six children by her husband. The affecting scene between her and the unhappy Monmouth, previous to his execution, is well known. It is said that James II., while he rigorously condemned his nephew to the scaffold, entertained, nevertheless, a strong degree of favour for the Duchess, who, being very plain, has almost been suspected of a rather scandalous intimacy with that monarch. [James, it is well known, was said, by his brother, to select his mistresses for penance.] His majesty certainly restored all her estates. The widow of Monmouth died so lately as 1732. She had married a second husband; but, nevertheless, continued, to the day of her death, to keep up the state of a princess of the blood, being attended with pages, served on the knee, and covered with a canopy in her room, where no one was allowed to sit in her presence. The late Duke Henry, grandfather to the present duke, was only second in succession to Duchess Anne. The family has not, during the last century, been in the least degree distinguished historically. It bears, however, a long descended character of true goodness and beneficence, which endears it to the bosoms of the common people. On the death of the Duke of Queensberry, in 1810, that title devolved upon the family of Buccleuch, through an ancestress; and both titles are now enjoyed by one person.

## COMPULSIVE HOSPITALITY.

Mr. Logan, in his work called the "Scottish Gael," treating of Highland hospitality, tells us of a chief who used to lie in wait at his house for travellers, with the purpose of entertaining them, and who, on finding any one unwilling to come in and be refreshed, used to say, "That the fellow must be a scrub at home himself!" As a still more striking exemplification of this extreme species of kindness, we may mention that the Lairds of Newtyle, in Forfarshire, used to keep cannon pointed to the road near by their old castle, so as to compel the wayfarers to come in and be regaled. It is also worth telling, that the Lairds of Hangshaw, in Selkirkshire, kept a large goblet, known far and wide as the "Hangshaw Ladie," which they administered full of reaming ale to every person, of whatever degree, whether willing or unwilling, who entered the house. A circumstance still more in point is related regarding a former proprietor of Crichton Castle in Edinburghshire. A stout baron, with a goodly retinue, having presumed to pass this person's gates without the usual homage of stopping to take refreshment, the Laird of Crichton mounted horse, with all his merry men, and, overtaking the recalcitrant traveller, brought him back, and threw him, with all his attendants, into the masonry tower of the castle. Afterwards, taking fear to himself for the result of such a strange exploit, he liberated the baron, and, plucking him at table, endeavoured to restore him to good humour, by formally waiting upon him at meat.

## THE SCENERY OF THE OHIO.

"The heart must indeed be cold that would not glow among scenes like these. Rightly did the French call this stream *La Belle Rivière*, (the beautiful river). The sprightly Canadian, plying his oar in cadence with the wild notes of the boat-song, could not fail to find his heart enraptured by the beautiful symmetry of the Ohio. Its current is always graceful, and its shores everywhere romantic. Every thing here is on a large scale. The eye of the traveller is continually regaled with magnificent scenes. Here are no pigmy mounds dignified by the name of mountains; no rivulets swelled into rivers. Nature has worked with a rapid but masterly hand; every touch is bold, and the whole is grand as well as beautiful; while room is left for art to embellish and fertilize that which nature has created with a thousand capabilities. There is much sameness in the character of the scenery; but that sameness is in itself as delightful, it consists in the recurrence of noble traits, which are too pleasing ever to be viewed with indifference; like the regular features which we sometimes find in the face of a beautiful woman, their charm consists in their own intrinsic gracefulness, rather than in the variety of their expressions. The Ohio has not the sprightly, fanciful wildness of the Niagara, the St. Lawrence, or the Susquehanna, whose impetuous torrents, rushing over beds of rocks, or dashing against the jutting cliffs, arrest the ear by their murmurs, and delight the eye with their eccentric wanderings. Neither is it like the Hudson, margin'd at one spot by the meadow and the village, and overhung at another by threatening precipices and stupendous mountains. It has a wild, solemn, silent sweetness, peculiar to itself. The noble stream, clear, smooth, and unruddied, sweeps onward with regular majestic force. Continually changing its course, as it rolls from vale to vale, it always winds with dignity, and, avoiding those acute angles which are observable in less powerful streams, sweeps round in graceful bends, as if disdaining the opposition to which Nature forces it to submit. On each side rise the romantic hills, piled on each other to a tremendous height; and between them are deep, abrupt, silent gorges, which at a distance seem inaccessible to the human foot; while the whole is covered with timber of a gigantic size, and a luxuriant foliage of the deepest hues. Throughout this scene there is a pleasing solitariness, that speaks peace to the mind, and invites the fancy to soar abroad among the tranquil haunts of meditation. Sometimes the splashing of the oar is heard, and the boatman's song awakens the surrounding echoes; but the most usual music is that of the native songsters, whose melody steals pleasantly on the ear, with every modulation, at all hours, and in every change of situation. The poet, in sketching these solitudes, might, by throwing his scene a few years back, add the light canoe, and the war-song of the Indians; but the peaceful traveller rejoices in the absence of that which would bring danger, as well as variety within his reach."—*Half's Letters from the West.*

## MOURNING.

Mourning, among the ancients, was expressed by very different signs, as by tearing their clothes, wearing sackcloth, laying aside crowns and other emblems of honour: thus Plutarch in his life of Cato, relates, that from the time of his leaving the city with Pompey, he neither shaved his head, nor, as usual, wore the crown or garland. A public grief was sometimes testified by a general fast. Among the Romans, a year of mourning was ordained, by law, for women who had lost their husbands. In public mourning, the shops of Rome were shut up, the senators laid aside their laticlavian robes, the consuls sat in a lower seat than usual, and the women put aside all their ornaments.

The colours of the dress, or habit, worn to signify grief, are different in different countries. In Europe, the ordinary colour for mourning is black; in China it is white, a colour that was the mourning of the ancient Spartan and Roman ladies; in Turkey, it is blue, or violet; in Egypt, yellow; in Ethiopia, brown, and kings and cardinals mourn in purple.

Every nation and country gave a reason for their wearing the particular colour of their mourning: black, which is the privation of light, is supposed to denote the privation of life; white is an emblem of purity; yellow is to represent, that death is the end of all human hopes, because this is the colour of leaves when they fall and flowers when they fade; brown denotes the earth, to which the dead return; blue is an emblem of the happiness which it is hoped the deceased enjoys; and purple or violet, is supposed to express a mixture of sorrow and hope.

The custom of mourning for the dead in shrieks and howlings, is of great antiquity, and prevails almost universally among the followers of Manomet.

## MILITARY PUNISHMENTS.

With respect again to the modes of enforcing discipline in our standing armies, we would willingly draw a veil over them, which no hand should be permitted to raise till it could be lifted on the system recently introduced. There is no gratification in describing such punishments as picketing, riding the wooden horse, flogging till the wretched criminal almost died under the lash, or any other of the barbarous inflictions which our English soldiers owed to the tyranny of their German masters. Far more satisfactory is it to learn that the wisdom and good feeling of later times have laboured to infuse among soldiers a sense of honour, which renders 100 lashes more painful to the prisoner now, than 1000 were to his precursor in crime.—*Lardner's Cyclopaedia.*

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